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REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

COUNTRY Poland

DATE DISTR. 16 Apr. '54

SUBJECT Polish Passport and Customs Controls

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REFERENCES:

PLACE ACQUIRED [REDACTED]

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE [REDACTED]

Travel from Poland to Sweden by Railroad

1. [REDACTED] and traveled by train via Szczecin-Odra Port to Tralleborg and Stockholm in a sleeping car. Passport and customs control by the Polish authorities was carried out in Odra Port. When we arrived at the station at about 1100 hours, all passengers were told by WOP officers who went through that they were not allowed to leave the cars. Guards were posted at each end and on both sides of the train. After a while WOP officers entered the compartments and took away the passports. The passports were returned about 30 minutes later. I am sure that they were taken to the office in the station and examined there. Afterward the customs officials went through. I was not asked to open my suitcase. Each person was permitted to take only 100 zlotys abroad and this sum was entered in the passports. Some passengers also had their jewelry entered on their passports to avoid difficulty when returning to Poland. The customs officials were very kind and the check was rather superficial. The WOP officers were very thorough; they examined closely both the interior and exterior of the car, even the undercarriage, and remained on guard until the cars were moved onto the boat.

Passport and Customs Control When Returning to Poland

2. Polish customs and passport controls started immediately upon arrival of the boat at Odra Port. The sleeping cars were surrounded by the WOP who began thorough checking, inside and out. My passport was taken from me by a WOP officer and returned in about 15 minutes. The customs control started as the cars were moved from the boat to the station. This appeared to be very thorough, the suitcases were

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opened and imported items declared. However, in reality, I discovered myself and also heard that the customs officials show considerable understanding toward persons returning from abroad, and accept small presents such as cigarettes, razor blades, etc. if no one is watching. They usually enter the small items declared on a form but overlook large items such as a few yards of woolen material, a new overcoat, shoes, etc. Sometimes a second customs official checks the work of the first.

Travel to Sweden by Plane

3. [redacted] and
25X1C traveled by plane. Passport and customs control was carried out at the airport in Warsaw. Each person was handled separately in one room. My passport was taken away by a uniformed officer, probably a WOP, and was returned after several minutes. I had to open my suitcase and brief case and the contents were very thoroughly checked. I had a Russian technical book with me which I needed in Sweden in connection with my official business and also certain papers among which was a translation of Swedish equipment specifications. These caused some trouble; every page was thoroughly examined, and the process involved three officials who were probably UB employees. They were so engrossed in examining these papers they overlooked my brief case which contained other classified material which I needed in Sweden. I saw a man, probably a foreigner, who was taken away; upon his return it was evident that a bodily search had been conducted. After checking the contents of my suitcase both suitcase and brief case were returned to me and I was sent back to the waiting room from which I boarded the plane. There were no further checks.
4. I know from hearsay that other Polish officials had similar experiences with passport and customs control at the airport and that everybody avoided travel by air if possible. This was especially true when returning to Poland because it was much easier to bring in articles through customs when traveling by train.
5. I returned from Sweden [redacted] by train; Polish passport and customs control were carried out as described above paragraph 2.

Travel to East Germany by Train

6. I was sent on an official visit to East Germany [redacted] and went by train via Poznan-Frankfurt a/Oder to Berlin in a sleeping car.
7. The passport and customs control by Polish officials was carried out at the Frankfurt a/Oder station on the east side of the river. The train was surrounded by WOP soldiers and the cars were thoroughly examined, inside and out. Our passports were taken away by the WOP Officers and returned after about 20 minutes. The customs control was a formality; we were asked to open our suitcases but they did not check the contents thoroughly.
8. German passport and customs control on the other side of the Oder River was quite superficial and friendly.

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